

Press release: UK leads the charge in eradicating scourge of modern slavery

- UK to protect up to 800,000 people in fragile and conflict-affected parts of Africa by providing families with alternative livelihood opportunities and protecting children from exploitation.
- Support for Prime Minister's Call to Action from international community underlined by endorsement from 77 states, increasing from 37 this time last year.
- UK, US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia commit to eradicating modern slavery from global supply chains.

The UK will continue to lead the fight against modern slavery at the UN General Assembly (UNGA), galvanising international action to stamp out this vicious scourge and launching a range of projects to tackle child slavery across Africa and Asia.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt will today [Monday 24 September] announce new protections for vulnerable children at risk of falling prey to traffickers. A UK backed project with UNICEF will provide up to 400,000 girls and boys in Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan at risk of slavery with birth registration documents and other measures to shelter them from forced labour and underage marriage.

The UK will commit extra support, taking the UK spend to over £200 million, to help create jobs, strengthen law enforcement and improve recruitment practices so people do not become victims. It will also provide vital protections for those who do. UK aid is working to wipe out slavery, which costs the UK's economy an estimated £4.3 billion a year, and prevent onward trafficking to the UK's shores.

Speaking ahead of the meeting in New York, Ms Mordaunt said:

"From the clothes we wear to the food we eat, the insidious virus of modern slavery is infiltrating all aspects of our daily life without us even realising. Not only does it have a huge cost to the global and the UK's economy, it is a shameful stain on our global conscience that must be eradicated for good.

"No one nation can banish this borderless crime alone. The international community must collaborate to dismantle predatory trafficking networks, support victims, strengthen justice systems and create sustainable alternative livelihoods."

The UK alongside the US, Canada, New Zealand and Australia will build on the success of the Prime Minister's Global Call to Action, with four new principles for governments across the globe, designed to tackle modern slavery in global supply chains. As a collective the UK along with the other

countries recognise the leveraging potential of their combined purchasing power – totaling more than \$600bn – to significantly prevent forced labour in public and private sector supply chains, a crime which entraps an estimated 25 million people worldwide.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerability Victoria Atkins, added:

“Denying people their freedom and basic human rights through modern slavery is a global tragedy. We as governments, businesses and citizens must do all we can to stop it.

“The UK and our partners are going further, showing leadership and setting out these new principles designed to drive out slavery from the supply chains which we will all benefit from.”

The UK’s leading stance sends a strong message that those doing business with the UK are required to act responsibly. With more than 60 per cent of forced labour victims in the private economy, Ms Mordaunt will also insist businesses step up efforts to eradicate the scourge of slavery from their supply chains. By galvanising their support, the UK hopes to enhance transparency and drive out modern slavery from the global economy.

In the year since the Prime Minister Theresa May launched the global Call to Action, 77 states have now endorsed it. This has increased from the 37 who joined last year. Today Ms Mordaunt will rally remaining members to do the right thing and join the global fight to eradicate these crimes which entrap over 40 million victims worldwide.

As children make up a quarter of modern slavery victims our additional support will:

- Equip up to 400,000 vulnerable people in conflict ravaged parts of Africa with skills training and alternative livelihood opportunities. Our support will improve law enforcement and assist conflict-affected families in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- Tackle the worst forms of child labour through a major new programme across six countries in Asia. Working in partnership with UNICEF, the International Labour Organisation and the Institute of Development Studies, UK support will reduce the vulnerability of children to forced labour in hazardous industries such as agriculture and clamp down on the trafficking of children into commercial sex work. Interventions that tackle the drivers of child labour will be rolled out including cash transfer support for families affected.
- Educate children against the perils of trafficking, assist social workers and help reintegrate victims back into society along dangerous trafficking and migratory routes in east Africa. As well as support to Africa and Asia to tackle trafficking at source, we are continuing to shine a spotlight on this crime domestically:
- We are doing more than ever to catch and convict offenders. The UK is transforming the law enforcement and criminal justice response to these crimes, resulting in almost 900 active police investigations in 2018 compared

to 188 in 2016.

- The UK is significantly increasing support for identified victims, particularly children and is rolling out Independent Child Trafficking Advocates across the UK to help them to rebuild their lives.
- Thanks to our world leading legislation, thousands of businesses have published modern slavery statements and companies have changed practices that were driving demand for modern slavery.
- In July, the UK Government announced an independent review of its landmark Modern Slavery Act to ensure our world-first legislation keeps in step with this evolving crime.

Notes to Editors:

- A year ago, the Prime Minister launched a global Call to Action to eliminate the borderless scourge of forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking, while doubling the UK's aid spending on modern slavery to £150 million. Just one year on, 77 states have endorsed this Call to Action and the UK has gone above and beyond its original commitment, increasing UK aid support by over a third to £200m, to tackle the root causes of slavery in key source and transit countries across Africa and Asia.
- The economic and social costs of modern slavery report estimates that it costs the UK up to £4.3 billion a year. Each instance of the crime is estimated to cost around £330,000, including the cost of support, lost earnings and law enforcement but most significantly the physical and emotional harms suffered by individuals, who are often exploited over months and sometimes years.
- The Prime Minister emphasised on her recent Africa visit, the UK will work in partnership with the Nigerian government to tackle slavery in key trafficking hotspots. With Nigeria as the fifth largest source country for trafficking into the UK, our support will prevent exploitation in the region and combat slavery here at home.
- As part of its spending increase, the UK will launch several programmes to tackle child slavery across Africa and Asia. This includes:
 - o £10 million UK aid package to protect up to 400,000 boys and girls at risk of slavery in the Horn of Africa and along dangerous migratory routes in Sudan and Ethiopia. Partnering with UNICEF, UK support will provide birth registration services so children can legally prove their identity and be sheltered from forced labour, military service and underage marriage. Our support will also educate children against the perils of trafficking, assist social workers and help reintegrate victims back into society.
 - o £12 million package to equip up to 400,000 vulnerable people in conflict ravaged parts of Africa with skills training and alternative livelihood opportunities. Our support will educate children on the disguised risks of trafficking, improve law enforcement and support conflict-affected families in countries such as the DRC.

o £26 million aid package to tackle the worst forms of child labour through a major new programme across six Asian countries. Working in partnership with UNICEF, the International Labour Organisation and the IDS, UK support will reduce the vulnerability of children to bonded labour in hazardous industries like agriculture and clamp down on children being trafficked into commercial sex work. Evidence-based interventions that tackle the drivers of child labour will be rolled out, such as social protection and cash transfer support for families affected.

- £5 million programme to scale up our work with the Government of Bangladesh to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in the country. Our support will help build an evidence base of what works and pilot innovative approaches to protect the most vulnerable, initially focusing on tea estates, domestic work and hazardous industrial work in Sylhet.

- The United Kingdom and the United States of America along with Canada, New Zealand and Australia will today announce they have agreed four new international principles which will provide a practical framework for governments to tackle human trafficking and modern slavery in global supply chains. This group of five countries will meet annually to coordinate their efforts.

General media queries

Email: mediateam@dfid.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 7023 0600

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